

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: January 19, 2012

Agenda Item: Financial Update

Division: Finance Division

Action Needed:

☐ **Approval of Proposed (Tentative) Rule** ☐ **Approval of Final Rule/Action**
☐ **Endorse Course of Action** ☒ **None - information only**

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 min

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Background (Brief description of the issue, decision to be made, history, etc.):

Hunting and fishing license sales are down for the second year in a row. Nationally, the economy continues to struggle and hunting and angling participation is declining. In Montana, the hard winter impacted deer and antelope numbers; the cold wet spring affected sales of fishing licenses; the price of fuel is high as is the unemployment rate; there is a buyers' resistance component as the nonresident licenses went up significantly. There are multiple factors contributing to the trend, but the message is that this perfect storm of events is resulting in declining revenues.

Public Involvement Process & Results (Brief description of the type of public involvement and summary of what we heard from the public):

FWP is currently developing both in-reach and outreach plans to inform our staff and constituents of the situation during the legislative interim. Briefing papers, background information, and outreach materials are being prepared to ensure a consistent message is delivered.

Alternatives and Analysis (Brief description of alternative solutions with analysis of the pros and cons of each):

The outreach efforts will involve communication with staff, legislators, and constituents. From this dialogue, alternatives will be developed and could result in any combination of program reductions, redirection of existing revenues, recommendations to change free/discounted licenses, fee increases, or any other practical suggestions.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale (Brief description of our recommendation to the Commission and the reasons for it):

This update is for the Commission's information and no action is required.